

big green expanse for the outfielders to race around in. When 400-foot drives are routine outs in the great portion of the park, Al Rosen isn't too much greater a threat than Willie Miranda. This is a park where a pitcher should be too proud to give a base on balls.

Richards changes from manager to general-manager almost as he showers and dresses. It can make for a long day. Early this season, he stayed over in New York after a series with the Yankees to try to talk trade with Buzzy Bavasi of the Dodgers, Horace Stoneham of the Giants and George Weiss of the Yanks. He wasn't able to see any of them, though, probably because none of them could think of an Oriole who could conceivably help him.

At 10:30 the following morning he caught a train for Baltimore, got to his hotel around 2:30 p.m. and found a reporter waiting in the lobby to ask him about a rumor that Gene Woodling was going to be benched against lefthanders. Richards told him that while Gene was going to be rested for a few days, lefthanders had nothing to do with it. "Players get tired during the season, not physically tired, but mentally and spiritually tired. The nervous tension builds up in them." Since it seemed awfully early in the game for a player to become physically, mentally or spiritually tired, the reporter appeared somewhat skeptical.

By 4 p.m., Richards was heading for the park. Since he had been on the road for a week, his first stop was at the office of farm director Jim McLaughlin. The Orioles' offices, on the first floor of the Stadium, just off the main entrance, were still in the process of construction, and the two green boards on which the names of the Orioles' farmhands will eventually be chalked were

still leaning against the wall behind McLaughlin's desk. The two men had to work off a mimeographed page, listing the 164 players in the system.

McLaughlin's first piece of news was that Charleston had returned Karol Kwack, an outfielder who had been sent to them on a conditional basis. "We owe the Yankees a player," McLaughlin said. "Let's find out whether he's acceptable to them."

But the Orioles also owed Brooklyn and Milwaukee an AAA player, so Richards suggested that they hold off for a couple of days, then give them all an equal chance.

The talk shifted to the San Antonio Missions, who were leading the Texas League. The Orioles had 25 players assigned to the Missions, and a few of them were going to have to be sent elsewhere within the week. Richards and McLaughlin went over some of the possibilities.

"How's Harrison's control been?" Richards wanted to know. Bob Harrison is a righthander with tremendous stuff, but little control. He hadn't gone too well after getting out of the army during the previous season, and Richards wanted him to get a lot of work. When McLaughlin told him that his control had shown little signs of improvement, Richards decided to send Harrison to Wichita in the Class A Western League so that he could work regularly and perhaps build a record that would increase his confidence.

"Charlie Locke won a 1-0 game last night," McLaughlin told him. "That's three in a row for him. Mel Held has pitched three good ones too."

"How about Snyder?" Richards asked. "How's that knee holding up?" Jim Snyder, a good-field, no-hit shortstop, had just gone back into the lineup after having six

stitches taken in his knee. McLaughlin had to tell him that the leg seemed all right but Snyder still wasn't hitting. "Jim Pisoni is still about the only guy hitting down there. Him and Bob Caffery."

When they got down to the Wichita lineup, most of the talk centered around Ron Babkoff, a little 19-year-old lefty signed off a local college last year. Babkoff had looked good in Class C Northern League during the latter part of the season, so the Orioles had jumped him, with some misgivings, to Class A. McLaughlin was able to report that Babkoff had been going well. Richards nodded. "That weight is going to help him."

At the corner of McLaughlin's desk, under the glass top, was a map of the country—segmented by color to show the sections charged to the individual scouts. The Orioles have 22 scouts assigned to watch over "free agents" (sandlots, college, high school and junior Legion players), and four scouts to tour the minors.

Richards and McLaughlin resumed a discussion about a young outfielder who had been recommended by his local scout for a sizable bonus. McLaughlin told Richards: "Fred Hofmann says he isn't that kind of a player. He says if the Cards want to go that high on him let them have him. The kid in Cusick's territory is twice the ball-player, Freddie says."

Richards agreed. He was then given a typewritten memorandum of a phone conversation McLaughlin had had with another scout about a college shortstop. The scout's report said that the kid could field like a big-league shortstop right now, but that he had only had one hit in the two games he'd watched, and had not hit the ball real good even once. However, the scout had added, other reports indicated that he was a much better hitter than that.

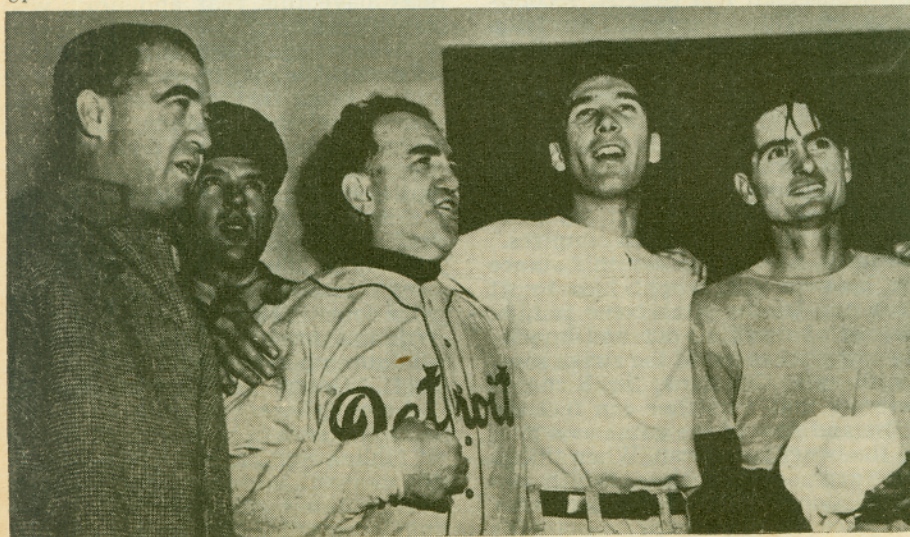
"If he's that good a felder," Richards said. "We can afford to offer him \$4,000."

They then got to a Minnesota pitcher named Laurie Slocum, a 20-year-old righthander whom the local scout, Phil Gallivan, had been watching for several years. Since Slocum was about to graduate from Carleton College, Gallivan was finally free to make him an offer.

McLaughlin told Richards that Fred Hofmann had already seen Slocum pitch one game and that both Hofmann and Gallivan were going to stay on the scene and report back.

"Good," Richards said. "Fly the

UP



Never a great player, Paul, at right, was a smart receiver, had his moment of glory in '45 with Series-winning Tigers.